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INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 001689

SIPDIS

EO 12958 DECL: 07/23/2019
TAGS PGOV, KDEM, SOCI, JO
SUBJECT: JORDANIAN SOCCER GAME HALTED AMIDST ANTI-REGIME
CHANTS, HOOLIGANISM TOWARD PALESTINIANS

Classified By: Charge d’Affaires Lawrence Mandel for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

1. (S) Summary: Anti-Palestinian hooliganism and slogans denigrating the Palestinian origins of both the Queen and the Crown Prince led to the Faisali 0, Wahdat 0, PPD (Riot)

2. (C) Jordanian police intervened to stop fan violence and the chanting of anti-regime slogans during a July 17 match between Amman soccer club A Storied Rivalry

3. (U) Faisali and Wahdat serve as the proxy champions of the East Banker and Palestinian communities, respectively. Faisali, whose name refers

4. (C) Wahdat, which takes its name from the large Palestinian refugee camp on the southern side of Amman, is seen as the favored team of Palestinian Game Over

5. (S) Faisali-Wahdat games have a long history of hooliganism and politically motivated violence. Past matches have been shut down by the police Official Fallout

6. (SBU) Official reaction to the match was surprisingly pro-forma. Prince Ali, half-brother to the King and chairman of the Jordanian Football Media Silence, Internet Cacophony
AMMAN 00001689 002 OF 002

7. (C) Despite all of the official condemnations of Faisali and its supporters, none of Jordan’s self-censoring media featured descriptive news

8. (SBU) Internet news sites, however, were full of commentary on the game and its implications. Many defended the Faisali supporters as “real Comment

9. (S) There is broad recognition throughout Jordan that the Faisali-Wahdat incident exposed the uncomfortable gap between East Bankers and Palestinians

10. (S) The King’s silence on the game and its political implications is deafening. High level government contacts and members of the diplomatic